

Squall 1/2

by Ryokko Tsuukayomi

Category: Final Fantasy VIII

Language: English

Status: In-Progress

Published: 2000-05-08 09:00:00

Updated: 2000-05-08 09:00:00

Packaged: 2016-04-27 17:24:12

Rating: K+

Chapters: 6

Words: 18,365

Publisher: www.fanfiction.net

Summary: Squall has a secret that freaks out Zell and Quistis...

1. Default Chapter Title

p align=centerSquall

>p align=centerBy: Ryokko & Tsuukayomi aka The Lemonmakers

>p align=centerChapter 1
p align=centerSquall's Secret

>
pA shrill, nerve-grinding, sanity-threatening voice pierced the calm and tranquil atmosphere of Balmab Gardens.

>p"Squall!" the voice called.
pSquall cringed. He absolutely hated that voice. And he really didn't care for the owner of the voice, the ever-spoiled, pampered, self-centered ho of Galbadia.

>pRinoa Heartilly.
pSquall Leonhart had been "dating" the girl for but a short time...or so Rinoa thought. Squall really didn't like the girl who had all but surgically attached herself to him.

>pHe had so far been able to avoid the girl the last week for the sole reason that someone, usually Zell Dinct much to Squall's mixed dismay and relief, or *shudder* Selphie Tilmitt was always with him.
pHe jumped up from his spot and looked around for an escape route. Rinoa's voice was coming from somewhere to his right, so the BEST escape route would be to the left.

>pMade sense.
pHe dashed around the corner, only to run smack into Selphie and Zell.

>p"BOOYAKA! Hiya Squall! It's SUPER-DUPER COOL running into a hero!" Selphie greeted him her usual, much-too-loud voice.
pSquall considered saying something about the fact that she had seen him everyday since they got back from defeating Ultimcia and the hero thing was old, but she would leave if he did and take Zell with her, leaving him alone, a position he didn't want Rinoa to catch him in, so he didn't. Instead, he said, "...whatever." Squall answered this to just about everything, now more so than ever.

>p"Hell yeah, baby!" Zell cheered, punching the ground in his usual manner. "We beat her good, didn't we?" Both Zell and Selphie had one-track minds.
p"...whatever."

>pAt that moment, Rinoa came around the corner.
p"Squall!" she

exclaimed flirtaciously. Then her tone went flat. "Oh, hi Zell, Selphie." A very lame attempt at being civil. Squall was grateful for this much.

>p"Um, hi, um, Rinoa," Squall mumbled.
p"Squall," Rinoa practically sang. "You wanna take a walk with me?"

>p"Uh," Squall stuttered, searching for an excuse to NOT take a walk with the Galbadian slut. "I'd, um, love to but...um...I have plans with these guys!" he suddenly exclaimed, throwing his arms around the shoulders of Zell and Selphie. Zell looked at him in surprise, but Selphie took the news the way she takes all news.
p"BOOYAKA! SUPER-DUPER COOL! What we doin', Squall?"

>p"What the hell are you talking about?" Zell whispered.
p"Play along and I'll buy you all the hot dogs you can eat in fifteen minutes," Squall whispered back.

>pZell considered this proposition for about .0001 seconds.
p"Hell, yeah! We got plans! Sorry, Rinoa." He shrugged.

>pRinoa look miffed. Not to mention pissed.
p"Hmpff," she pouted. "Fine. Enjoy yourself." With that less-than-biting remark, she turned and stormed off. Squall dropped his arms.

>p"Booyaka! So, what we doin' huh?" Selphie asked once more.
pSquall was about to reply "Nothing," but he remembered his promise, so instead he sighed.

>p"First we get to watch Zell stuff his face for fifteen minutes."
p"Super-mega-BUMMER!" she cried. "I can watch silly ol' Zell do that any time! Why?" she whined.

>p"I promised." She pouted.
p"What're we doin' after that?" she asked sulkily. Squall shrugged.

>p"...whatever." Selphie's mood brightened considerably.
p"Can we go see Seifer? He's back in Garden's, and I need another member for my evil army of....I mean, the Garden's Festival Committee." Squall's blood ran cold, as did Zell's.

>p"Hell, no!" Zell yelled. "We are not going to see Seifer!"
pSelphie and Zell started to argue as the trio walked to the cafeteria. Squall sighed. It was going to be a long day...

>p align=center* * *p

>pRinoa was going on and on...Seifer wished she'd shut up and go away.
p"He totally snubbed me for Zell and Selphie!" Rinoa exclaimed for about the fifth time.

>pSeifer had tuned her out before, and was actually somewhat surprised to hear that. Not even Squall was stupid enough to make plans with Selphie Tilmitt and Zell Dinct of all people.
p"I mean, I don't think he even had plans with them!" Rinoa rambled again.

>pSeifer took in this information, then tuned her out again.
pObviously, Squall wanted to keep AWAY from Rinoa, which, in Seifer's opinion, was understandable.

>piBut there's something else,i he thought. He KNEW there was another reason, but he couldn't quite think of what it was, like something he was starting to remember but...iLousy GFs. What is it?!? Something I used to know, something important...Lousy GFs!/i

>p align=center* * *p

>pSquall stared at the plate of hot dogs in front of Zell. Zell had managed to choke down about 100 gil of hot dogs and he still had another...Squall glanced at the clock. Minute.
pBy the time the fifteen minutes were up, Zell had cost him 107 gil. Squall went up to pay while Selphie and Zell resumed their argument.

>pSquall took this opportunity to bail. He wondered where Rinoa would be so he could take an alternate route. He quickly decided to that the safest course of action would be to dash to the dorms and hope he

didn't run into her in between.
pSquall took a deep breath and ran back to his dorm room and made it safe and Rinoa-free. He locked his door and breathed a sigh of relief.

>pHe tugged off his leather jacket and threw it on the bed. He reached under his shirt and undid the bandages he wore wrapped tightly around his chest. He sighed with relief when they came off.
pThere was a knock on the door. Squall jumped. "W-who is it?"

>p"Zell. I want to talk to you."
p"Well, you can't!" Squall exclaimed hastily as he slipped his jacket back on and zipped it up for maybe the first time EVER. "I'm...busy!"

>p"Too busy to talk to me?" Zell whimpered, sounding quite pathetic and hurt.
pSquall groaned. "Oh, all right!" He made a quick doublecheck in the mirror before opening the door. "What?" he demanded.

>p"I need to talk to you," Zell said, seeming more jumpy than usual, if that were possible. "Can I come in?"
p"...whatever." Squall turned around and sat down on his bed. Zell stepped in and closed the door.

>p"I been noticin'...are, like, you avoiding Rinoa or something?"
p"..."

>p"'Cause...it helps to talk about stuff."
pSquall stared at him blankly. "What do you WANT, Zell?"

>pZell glanced down at his feet. "Uh...it was really nice of you to buy me those hot dogs..."
p"...whatever."

>p"But, um, I thought you were going to spend the day with me and Selphie."
p"..."sorry. I was trying to avoid Rinoa."

>pZell paused. "Oh. Well, that's okay, I guess..." He put his hands in his back pockets and Squall vaguely wondered if he knew how dorky he looked when he did that. "Hey Squall?"
p"Yeah?"

>p"What're those?" he asked, motioning to the bandages on Squall's dresser.
pSquall jumped a little, but kept his cool. "Bandages."

>p"Well DUH. I can see that. Why the hell do you have bandages lying around?"
p"Um...well, ya see...I bruised my ribs fighting Ultimcia."

>p"Oh. Shouldn't you be WEARING those then?"
p"They bugged me. I'll put 'em back on later," he replied, shrugging.

>pZell chuckled, returning his hands to his pockets. "Whatever floats your boat, man." Squall stared at him patiently, waiting for him to leave, but he did no such thing.
p"What?"

>p"That's...it's not what I came to talk to you about, Squall."
p"And what, pray tell, DID you want to talk about...?"

>pZell fixated on his feet again. "Us."
pSquall blinked, and then burst into laughter.

>pZell flushed red. "It- it's not FUNNY!"
p"I'm sorry," Squall giggled without an ounce of sincerity. "But I beg to differ..."

>p"What!?" Zell shrieked. "What the hell is wrong with me, huh!? Can you look me in the eye and say that Rinoa's better for you than me?"
pSquall stared blankly again and considered it for about .0001 seconds. "No..but...you're serious, aren't you?"

>p"Hell, yeah!" Zell exclaimed. "You're hella cute!"
pSquall looked at Zell, and then at the distant wall, and then back at Zell. "Um..thank..you...I think." You worry me.

>p"Come on...don't tell me you're STRAIGHT now. Everybody knows about you and Seifer..."
pSeifer actually brushes his teeth.../i "What ABOUT me and Seifer?"

>p"Zell grinned stupidly. "You know.." he cooed as he elbowed Squall

in the ribs, quickly catching himself. "Oh! Sorry, man!"
pSquall pretended to flinch in pain.

>p"I-I didn't mean to hurt you!" Zell shouted a little too loudly.

"Are you all right?"
pZell smiled flirtaciously. "From Seifer, right?"
pSquall held his head in his hands and chuckled. I do not believe this is

happening. It's just not possible.

>p"What does Seifer got that I ain't got?"
piTalent? Intelligence?
No HELL obsession? An inclination towards actually using
toothpaste?/i "We're not having this conversation, Zell."

>p"You don't like me," Zell accused sadly. "You hate me."
pSquall groaned. "I don't hate you."

>p"Yes you do," he pouted. "You hella hate me."
p"I do not hate you," Squall sighed. "This is just...really, really, REALLY awkward
for me."

>p"It doesn't have to be," Zell whispered. Squall quirked his
eyebrow. "It doesn't have to be awkward at all." With this, he jumped
forward and kissed Squall full on the lips.
pSquall tried to squirm away, but Zell held him still. Finally, after what seemed like
an agonizing eternity, Zell let go of a very-sick Squall.

>pAll of a sudden, Squall smiled. "Zell, you ought to watch what you
wish for."
p"Oh?"

>p"'Cause you just might get it..."
pZell licked his lips.

"Really?"

>p"..and not like it at all."
p"I know what I like, baby."

>pSquall grinned sadistically and whispered something into Zell's
ear. Zell lit up. Apparently what he heard, he liked.
pFive minutes later, Zell's horrified scream could be heard throughout
Gardens.

>p align=center* * *p

>pHardly a soul saw Squall that next week. Zell had a far-away look
in his eyes, and always turned an unhealthy-looking shade of green at
the very mention of the dark-haired SeeD. He was often compared to a
cat in a room full of rocking chairs.
pEveryone in Gardens was talking about the two, knowing full well that SOMETHING had happened
between the two. Those who knew the two the best became worried,
especially since Squall had started locking his door, something that
he had NEVER done before.

>pThis of course, did NOT make Rinoa happy.
p"And he's ignoring me again!" Rinoa whined. "And I told him I'd leave him for you and he
just said '...whatever,' ...Seifer, are you LISTENING to me?"

>p"Sure, Rinoa, sure. Midget rodeo."
p"YOU'RE NOT LISTENING!" she shrieked.

>p"Later, Rinoa. Stuff to do." He walked away.
p"Seifer Almasy, get back here!" she screamed, completely ignored, as usual.

>p align=center* * *p

>p*Knock knock* "Who is it?" Squall demanded irritable.
p"Quistis!
Can we talk?"

>pSquall remembered exactly what happened the LAST TIME somebody
wanted to talk to him. "No. Go away."
p"Please, Squall! I worried
about you..."

>pSquall crawled out of bed, running his fingers through his hair,
and opened the door. "What do you want?"
p"Can I come in?"

>p"No, go away."
pQuistis crossed her arms. "I thought you were
over the whole loner thing. I'm not leaving until you tell me what
happened between you and Zell."

>pSquall groaned and sat down on his bed. "As if you haven't already

heard a dozen different stories..."
p"I want to hear the REAL story," she said as she closed the door. "Talking will make you feel better."

>p"You're overstepping the teacher-student boundaries here, Quistis. Just leave me alone."
p"Oh, Squall...you're so...confused! Seifer, Rinoa, and Zell...why can't you just find someone who's good for you?"

>pSquall shrunk away. "Now you're REALLY overstepping, Quisty..."
pShe grabbed his hands. "What you need is an older girlfriend, one who will take care of you."

>pSquall frowned. "What I need are friends who don't always hit on me."
pShe chuckled, and kissed him. Squall tried to squirm away, but Quistis held him down. Then she pulled away, with that seductress smile on her face.

>p"If you're not careful, I'll do to you what I did to Zell," Squall warned flatly.
pWith that, Quistis beamed and made a little purring noise.

>pHer terrified scream could be heard throughout Garden.
p align=center* * */p

>p"Wow, first Zell, then Quistis. What's up with Squall that's so damn scary?" was the comment made by a young student at Garden to her friends as Seifer made his way through the familiar halls.
pSeifer didn't stop to listen. It was a common conversation in Garden the last week and it held no more interest for him than Rinoa did.

>p"Seifer!" Rinoa called.
piSpeak of the devil. Damnit, I was hoping to avoid her today./i "Would you believe that guy?" she demanded. "First Zell, then Quistis! Do you think he's trying to tell me something?"

>piOther than that you're an annoying ho?i

>p"Other than that you're an annoying ho?"
pSeifer Almasy was one to speak his mind.

>p"Did he say that about me? That bastard!" Seifer rolled his eyes, then turned to go, but Rinoa caught his arm. "Hey! Where are you going?"
p"What do I have to do to get you to go away?" he snapped irritably.

>pRinoa shook in rage. Never had any man treated her the way Squall and Seifer had been lately.
p"HOW DARE YOU!" she shrieked as he walked away, ignoring her as usual. But then she dashed after him and grabbed his arm. "Hey! I'm not done with you yet! We're getting back together, Seifer Almasy!"

>p"We...are?"
p"Yeah! 'Cause I know YOU wouldn't cheat on me with both a guy AND a girl like SOMEONE we all know who shall remain nameless!"

>p"Um..." Seifer hesitated. "Fujin, Raijin!" he shouted. A that point, she smacked him and ran off.

2. Default Chapter Title

p align=centerChapter 2

>p align=centerSecrets Revealed

>pSquall knew he shouldn't answer the phone, but he did anyway, if for no other reason than to stop it from ringing.
p"Hey there, NYMPHO!"

>p"Almasy, I'm hanging up now."
p"But you wouldn't do that to ME, now would you, Shnookums?"

>p"This conversation is not even going to start, Seifer."
p"Come on, I'm just kidding I'll stop being sadistic. I just wanna have a real conversation with you, Muffin."

>p"Is this a prank call?"
p"No." Squall sighed.
>p"Fine, whatever, just as long as you promise not to hit on me."
p"I would never do that!" Seifer exclaimed on the other end, not sounding a bit sincere.
>pi...whatever.i "I wouldn't put it past you, Almasy, to do just that just to spite me, you arrogant bastard!" There was silence on the other end for a moment. "Dear Hyne, I left him speechless. That's gotta be a first."
>p"You surprise me, Leonhart. That's gotta be the first time you have EVER said what you were thinking and thought what you were saying."
p"What the...? Who did you know that?"
>p"Lucky guess."
p"...whatever."
>p"I just wanted to know what's going on. Wanted to hear it first-hand, ya—" He made a mental note to kill Raijin.
p"...you already know, Almasy."
>p"I...do?"
p"Yes. You do. Remember?"
>pSeifer was silent for so long that Squall nearly asked if he was still there. "Uh...I guess I don't, Leonhart."
p"Well THINK about it," Squall snarled as he slammed down the phone.
>pSeifer blinked, the receiver buzzing in his hand, knowing that somehow he knew what Squall was talking about...goddamn, lousy, friggin' GFs!
* * *
>pSquall sneered at the phone. iGoddamnit, Seifer! How did you forget? How COULD you forget?!? If you had a gil for every time you forgot something you'd be rich.i
>pHe sighed and flopped on his bed. It was official: Life had gone from bad to worse.
p align=center* * */p
>pSeifer walked into the Disciplinary Room, where Fujin and Raijin were playing Triple Triad- or rather, they were arguing over who got to use their favorite card. They never bothered to ask why they, insignificant orphans in a military school, had their own Triple Triad cards.
p"Hey, guys," Seifer started to say, immediately drawing his posse's collective attention. "Did I ever, like, tell you anything about Squall?"
>p"LIKE...?"
p"I dunno. Like...something weird."
>p"Ya said he was bi alcoholic, ya know?"
pSeifer sighed. "Well I REMEMBER that! But when I talked to him earlier he said I knew what was going on...but I can't remember."
>pRaijin raised an eyebrow. "Maybe he did the same thing to ya as to Zell and Quisty, ya know, and ya just forgo-"
>p"RAGE!" Fujin screeched and kicked him in the shin.
>p"Well...there's only one way to find out. Let's go talk to Kinkypants!"
p align=center* * */p
>p"For the last time, I am NOT letting you in!" Squall shouted. "Every time I let somebody in, they try to take advantage of me, and quite frankly, I wouldn't put it above you, Seifer Almasy!"
p"Aww, come on, Squall! You should now me better than that!" Squall heard Fujin and Raijin laughing, the Seifer's voice telling them to shut up. Squall rolled his eyes.
>p"That's the point, Almasy."
p"You wound me, Squall. Besides, my posse's with me. If I wanted to try something, which I don't, would I honestly have my posse with me?" Squall considered this.
>piIF I wanted to talk to you, which I don't, would I honestly do it with your posse around?i
>p"...whatever." He sighed and opened the door a crack.
p"What do you want?" he growled.
>p"Wanted to ask you what I'm supposed to remember." Fujin and Raijin nodded simultaneously and Squall worried about how much time the three spent together.
pSquall didn't reply, merely sighed and opened the door wider, turning on his heel and sitting back down on

the bed. He dimly wondered if sitting on his bed was a good idea considering his current record the last few weeks and disturbing similarities between the incidents.

>p"What do you want?" he demanded again.
p"SEIFER, REMEMBER. WHAT?" Fujin replied.

>p"..."
p"Damnit, Leonhart, what the fuck am I supposed to remember?" Seifer snapped.

>pSquall just sat with his arms crossed, staring at the wall in front of him.
p"Hey, Leonhart, wake up!" Seifer ordered. Squall didn't react. Seifer waved his hand in front of Squall's face. He jumped, giving Seifer a look that made him look like someone else, a look that was so familiar...

>pSeifer shook his head. "What the fuck am I supposed to remember?" Squall looked hurt. He turned his head away.
p"Nothing, nevermind. It's not important," he whispered.

>pSeifer considered a new plan of attack. Squall was obviously NOT going to tell him, at least not while Fujin and Raijin were in the room.
p"Scram," he told them.

>p"WHAT?"
p"Why, ya know?"

>p"I said scram! Get lost!" Raijin whined, then left. Fujin sneered at Squall, then followed Raijin out, leaving Squall and Seifer alone. "All right, Leonhart. You're going to tell me what I'm supposed to remember."
pSquall went over to his dresser and stood with his back to Seifer.

>p"Do you remember when we were in the orphanage?"
p"Vaguely."

>p"Remember how we were best friends?"
p"I remember setting fire to Chicken-Wuss a lot."

>p"How many GFs do you actually use?"
p"Dunno." Squall sighed.

>p"Do you remember," Squall said slowly. "That I...had.. a crush on you?"
pSeifer looked irritated. "I do NOW."

>p"And do you remember why?"
p"Sure, you're gay."

>p"No..."
p"Sorry, bi." Seifer rolled his eyes.

>p"Not that either."
p"You're just really, really confused by my stunning good looks?"

>p"..."whatever." iYou're ego's too big.i "Um...that's not even plausible."

>pSeifer sneered. "Then what are you saying that you're aoh, yeah!" He laughed. "I remember now! Huh, how'd I forget that?"
p"GFs?"

>p"Whats?"
p"..."nevermind."

>pSeifer coughed. "So...like, how'd you pull that off? Especially after hitting puberty last week and all..."
p"You're not even funny. I used bandages.

>p"Oh. Um, what about the Rinoa thing?"
p"I plead insanity. And I didn't wanna blow my cover."

>pSeifer decided to change the subject, as Rinoa could never hold his interest for more than a few seconds. "Okay. So...why, again?" Squall stopped short.
p"Um...I honestly don't remember. I'm sure it was important. But obviously it isn't important anymore." Squall shrugged.

>p"So you did that for all this time and you don't even remember why?"
p"Too late to back out?"

>p" Makes sense." But he was still kind of snickering.
p align=center* * */p

>p"KILL," Fujin grumbled over her crumpets and tea.
p"Are ya still cranky about that, ya know?"

>p"RAGE." Kick.
p"Ow!! Geez, ya know! You're killin' SQUALL, not

me!"

>p"RAGE," she grumbled again, although this time it was not accompanied by the usual pain in his leg, as it was not directed towards him. Raijin twisted his head around to see what Fujin had already noticed: Squall and Seifer walking up to them...together.
p"Hey! It's Seifer and Squall! Hi, ya know!" Fujin kicked him under the table. Raijin whimpered.

>pSeifer sat in his usual spot, equidistant from his two friends. Squall took a chair between Raijin and Seifer, Fujin directly across the table from this seat. A disquieting fact, considering the evil glares Fujin was shooting in that direction.
p"Guess what!" Seifer announced. "Squall's a GIRL! That's what I forgot!"

>pSquall hid her face in her hands and got up, but Seifer grabbed the cotton collar of her coat and pulled her back down into her chair.
p"Sit down." Fujin was laughing in her seat, and Raijin was still trying to figure out just what exactly was going on. iWho was a girl, again? Fujin? Why is that funny, ya know?/i

>pSquall made a little whine deep in her throat and Seifer rolled his eyes.
p"Relax," he told her, patting her leather-clad thigh. "If there's anybody you can trust, it's Fujin and Raijin." Fujin and Raijin beamed. "I mean...they don't got any friends, who the hell are they gonna tell?" Fujin and Raijin STOPPED beaming.

>pThere was an uncomfortable silence on all parts but Seifer's. Meanwhile, Raijin got some heavy-duty thinking done.
p*Oh, SQUALL'S the girl. That's weir, ya know? Hey, who am I asking, ya know? Me? I already know, ya know?/i*

>p"Oh no, ya know!" he suddenly exclaimed, drawing the attention of...everybody. "I hit a girl! I'm so sorry, ya know!"
p"PIG," Fujin snarled.

>p"...whatever." iI do remember kicking his ass, after all.i

>pMeanwhile, Rinoa strutted up to the table. "If it isn't my boyfriend and his brand-new buddies."
p"Uh...who would you be referring to?" Seifer asked. Squall's forehead hit the table.

>p"SQUALL." Fujin started laughing again. Raijin was once again lost.
p"But like...Squall's a girl, ya know?" he said at risk of looking stupid.

>pAt this point, Squall fell out of her chair, sending it skidding across the floor. She scrambled to her feet, but Seifer once again caught her collar and pulled her down right to the floor. If he had to put up with Rinoa, so did she.
p"Raijin is such a moron," Rinoa commented. Fujin now was laughing so hard that tears rolled down her cheeks. "It's like, I know the difference between kissing a guy and kissing a girl."

>pSquall tried once again to escape, but Seifer's hand clutched firmly to the collar. Now he was curious.
p"What do you plead?" he asked her.

>p"I told you, INSANITY. Now leave me alone."
p"Insanity?" he echoed, implying that there HAD to be more of a reason. Fujin by now had tipped over backwards, chair and all, which diverted everyone's attention, much to Squall's relief.

>pAfter checking if Fujin was okay, Seifer turned back to the question. "INSANITY?" he repeated.
p"Do I really have to list EVERYTHING that caused the insanity?"

>p"Well, I got the time," he answered, and turned to his posse. "You guys got the time, don't ya?" Fujin nodded enthusiastically. Raijin, lost as he was, did the same.
pSquall started ticking off reasons. "I'm messed up, first of all. Just look at my pants and- hey, but I -like- my pants! I had Quistis chasing me around and WAY overstepping

the teacherstudent relationship." Seifer understood first-hand. "Do kinky torture scenes mean anything to you?"

>p"Hey!" Seifer smacked her on the back of the head.
p"Don't hit girls!" Raijin smacked Seifer on the back of the head.

>p"JERK!" Fujin kicked Raijin in the shin.
p"Squall's not a GIRL!" Rinoa exclaimed, and she smacked Squall because she was feeling left out.

>pSquall continued her defense. "I'm not done! I had to beat up Seifer. That was traumatic."
p"Yeah!" Seifer grinned. "How could it NOT be, with this face?"

>p"...whatever." WHACK. "I was lost in time, dead, and the last thing I remember is that damn Charlie Brown outfit, and that damn flower field--
p"Shut up, already. We got the point, Leonhart." Seifer rolled his eyes.

>p"A flower field full of natural hallucinogens and just for a second, I thought she was..." she trailed off. "Someone else. Nevermind."
pTHAT caught Seifer's attention. "Who?" iWho on earth could Squall like?/i He had already forgotten that she had named HIM earlier.

>p"...nobody."
p"You're a crappy liar, Leonhart." Seifer started to sing. "Squall's got a boy and/or girlfriend!"

>p"...whatever." WHACK! "Why do you keep hitting me?" she demanded, rubbing the now-sore spot on the back of her head.
pRaijin jumped right in at a statement he was sure that he might have understood.

"'Cause he must LIKE ya, ya know!"

>p"RAGE!" Kick.
pSquall REALLY wanted to leave, even though she SHOULD have felt right at home there. Everybody there was dysfunctional.

>p"So...Squall is...a girl..." Rinoa stammered.
p"You know you're bad when you're slower than Raijin," Seifer said.

>p"Ain't that the truth, ya- hey!"
p"That's...not...TRUE!" Rinoa managed to say before she dashed off. iTypical./i everybody thought.

>p"Geez, I'm gonna have to do to her what I did to Zell and Quistis."
p"What's that?"

>p"Ummmm...hey, is that a UFO?" Only Raijin fell for it. He hid behind Fujin.
p"Help! They've come back for me!" he cried. They ignored him.

>p"What did you DO to them? Flash 'em?"
p"Um...whatever. I'm going back to my room." She wiggled free of Seifer's grasp and walked back to the dorms.

>

3. Default Chapter Title

p align=centerChapter 3:/p

>p align=centerThe boy is mine!p

>
pFujin DID have some sympathy for the general public hidden deep in her heart, and some of that surfaced for Squall. iFlashing Quistis and ZELL!?! Oh, I'll bet THAT was FUN./i

>pThat sympathy, however, would quickly re-submerge into that deep and hidden place of her heart whenever she saw Squall and Seifer walking down the hall together.
pLike they were now.

>pThis was a typical scene lately, seeing as Seifer had attached himself to his new best friend, or rather, his old best friend.

Apparently the two had been best friends before Seifer forgot about Squall being a girl and Squall, in turn, began isolating herself from the known world.
pAs usual, Seifer was talking animatedly and Squall's eyes were glazed over, desperately looking around for an

escape.

>p"RAGE," she muttered as the two passed by her without so much as a 'Hello.' "At least I pay attention, even if I HAVE heard the story."
pWhat?" a voice asked behind her. Fujin whirled.

>p"RAIJIN, HI."
p"What story? I wanna hear a story, ya know?"

>p"SEIFER, STORY."
p"Seifer's telling a story? Well, then where IS Seifer, ya know?"

>p"SQUALL," Fujin snarled, indicating to the couple walking down the hall.
p"Oh! Seifer's tellin' SQUALL a story, ya know?" Fujin growled. "Hey! Did ya hear?" Squall got us a budget increase, ya know?" Fujin groaned. iWhy does Squall have to be so damn nice?/i

>pFujin wondered if there was someone, anyone, to distract Squall from Seifer. Zell, Quistis, and Rinoa at on time would have worked, but she got the sinking feeling that those three were no longer plausible options. She toyed briefly with the idea of manipulating Selphie into annoying Squall, but she'd rather swallow broken glass than have anything to do with the evil Tilmitt girl.
pFujin racked her GF-destroyed brain for someone whom she could use to keep Squall away from Seifer.

>p"RAIJIN!" she suddenly exclaimed. "COWBOY, NAME?" He looked at her blankly.
p"What cowboy, ya know?"

>puHORNYu COWBOY," she snapped.

>p"Oh, him!" he laughed. "The one that hits on all the girls, ya know?"
p"AFFIRMATIVE. NAME, WHAT?"

>p"Irvine, ya know? Why?"
pBut Fujin had already left.

>p align=center* * *p

>p"You, my friend, are a ladykiller," the faux cowboy said to his image in the mirror, forming a gun with his finger and winking at himself. The he picked up an economy-size bottle of the world's most rancid, foul-smelling cologne and drenched his face in it.
pThere was a knock on the door.

>pIrvine took a second to make sure his voice was deep and Barry-White-ish before saying, "Who is it?"
p"FUJIN."

>pThe answer surprised him, but he did not hesitate to remove his vest and step outside. "Howdy, one-eyed honey. What can I do ya for?"
pShe shuddered, but managed to say, "I have a friend who thinks you're cute."

>pIrvine held up his hands. "Noooo way! Irvine Kinneas don't do blind dates, babe. How do I know you're not settin' me up with some dog?"
p"Oh, she's not a dog. She's cute. She's a bit taller than me, and has a thing for leather..."

>p"Quisty?"
p"SQUALL!"

>p"Whoa! No way! Irvine Kinneas don't swing that way!"
p"Squall is a GIRL!" Fujin exclaimed. "That's what freaked out Quistis and Zell...couldn't you tell? What a dumbass..."

>p"...really?"
pShe nodded. "Oh yeah. And she wants you...bad."

>pIrvine sprinted away without so much as a 'thank you', screaming, "I'm finally gonna score!" at the top of his lungs.
p align=center* * *p

>pThere was a knock on the door.
p"What now?" Squall snapped.

>p"Squall! I need to talk to you!" Not recognizing the voice, Squall got up from the bed and cracked the door, DESPITE the X-File-worthy, Mulder-would-love-this similarities between this incident and the Zell and Quistis incidents.
p"Who the hell are you?" she asked the cowboy who stood outsider her door.

>pThe cowboy removed his hat and held it at his chest in a look-at-me-I'm-a-gentleman-who's-greeting-a-lady fashion.
"Irvine."
p"..."
>p"From the orphanage."
p"..."
>p"And the Edea assassination mission."
p"..."
>p"We saved the world."
p"..."
>pHe sighed. "The horny cowboy."
p"Oh yeah!" Irvine sighed again. He hated being remembered only as the 'horny cowboy.'
>p"Can I come in?" he asked, glancing in Squall's room. Squall shrugged in a 'What the hell do I care?' fashion and opened the door wider to allow him in. She went back to the bed and sat down.
p"What do you want?" she asked with about as much patience as can be expected.
>p"So like...I heard you were a girl," Irvine said, at the risk of being wrong and looking like a complete fool.
p"Did Rinoa tell you that?"
>p"Fujin, actually." Little did they know that Fujin was outside, listening to their conversation and grinning. "Is it true?" Squall looked at him for a moment, debating the intelligence of telling him that yes, it was true. Finally, she decided that there was no point in trying to deny it anymore.
p"Yes, it's true." Irvine looked all-too happy about this. "Go away, Irwin," she said bluntly. The last thing she needed was more people trying to rape her, and she knew she wouldn't be able to turn him off. Nothing could do that.

>p"But Squally..!"
p"Out. Now." Squall had that pissed, poofy LionHeart look on her face again.
>pIrvine, who had an ungodly amount of experience in the rejection department, knew when it was time to leave.
pHe gave her one last look, that, in his own I'm-a-ladykiller, arrogant, thought process, said 'last chance'. "OUT!" she snarled, throwing her pillow at him.

>pHe ducked out the door, allowing the pillow to thud harmlessly against it. He walked away from Squall's dorm, depressed that, once again, he had failed to score.
p"IRVINE. STOP," a voice ordered. He ignored it.
>pFujin stopped following him. She'd have to stick him and Squall together another way.
p align=center* * */p
>piSteady, girl,i Fujin thought as Seifer and Squall were once again walking down the halls, laughing and talking, drawing curious stares from passer-bys that didn't know that Squall was a girl.
>pThey threw her a wave as they passed, a gesture she returned gracefully, then she checked back in the Disciplinary Room.
pShe gave Raijin the thumbs-up sign and took off after Seifer and Squall. She was confident that Raijin would play his part well. If there was anything that Raijin could do, it was acting hurt. He'd had an ungodly amount of experience in pain.
>p"SEIFER!" she called. They stopped and turned to her. "RAIJIN, HURT!" Seifer rolled his eyes.
p"Isn't he always?" he asked, then started to leave. Squall gave him a puzzled look, then started to follow him, still obviously wondering why they weren't going to help Raijin.
>p"LEG, BROKEN," Fujin went on, almost guilty because of Squall's seeming concern for Raijin. Almost.
p"Are you sure?" Seifer asked, still skeptical and irritated.
>p"WELL, NO," she admitted. "UNSURE."
p"What happened?"

>p"RAIJIN, STUPID. KICKED. TOO HARD."
pSeifer sighed. "All right." He turned to Squall. "Go on ahead. I'll catch up." She nodded and walked on. "Where is he?" he asked Fujin.

>p"DISCIPLINARY ROOM." Seifer took off.
pFujin smiled, and turned after Squall, who didn't notice she was being followed.

>p align=center* * *p

>pSquall stopped at an open door. She glanced around. iWhy is the door open?i she wondered. iThere's no one around! Who the hell left the damn door open?/i She moved to shut it, but was pushed roughly from behind.

>pShe stumbled forward. She spun on her heel to see who had pushed her, only to find a now-closed door. She glanced around the room she had been shoved into, and found, much to her dismay, that it was a closet.
piGreat,/i Squall thought. And things were about to get worse. As she tried the door, only to discover it locked, she heard the voice of someone she had not seen.

>p"Well, hey baby! I didn't think you'd come after that scene in the dorm, but, boy, Fujin was right!"
p"FUJIN, OPEN THIS DOOR!" No answer. Fujin had already gone to meet up with Seifer. "I mean it, Fujin! RIGHT NOW!"

>p align=center* * *p

>p"RAIJIN, OKAY?" iAlone at last...i

>p"He's fine," Seifer replied gruffly. "Just like always...the guy's indestructible..." he shrugged. "He'd about have to be."
pFujin beamed. "AFFIRMATIVE!"

>p"Hey, where did Squall go?"
pFujin batted her eye innocently. "DUNNO. SAID SOMETHING. 'COWBOY, CLOSET'."

>p"Huh. Oh well. Wanna go get a cheeseburger?"
p"AFFIRMATIVE!"

>p"Hold it right there!" someone yelled.
p"CRAP," Fujin muttered as she whipped around to face a disheveled Squall. "HI, SQUALL! FUN, CLOSET?"

>pSquall was not in the mood to talk. She shoved Fujin away from Seifer, then pulled out her weapon. Fujin did the same. A crowd instantly gathered, chanting "Fight! Fight! Fight!" Seifer demanded that they stop and tell him what the hell was going on, but no one listened.
p"You went too far, Fujin," Squall growled.

>pFujin's reply was to throw her shiruken at Squall's head. Squall's gunblade shot up as if of its own accord, and the deadly disk ricocheted off Lionheart and back to Fujin, who caught it handily.
pThe two women charged each other, and the weapons clashed, causing sparks to fly out. They pulled away and Squall slashed at Fujin, who blocked the blow.

>p"Raijin! What the hell is going on?" Seifer bellowed at the dark-skinned giant. Raijin seemed to considered his options, all of which would result in a lot of pain. Life was just NOT fair, ya know?
pSquall, meanwhile, had jumped at the wall, planted her feet against it, and pushed off, over Fujin's head, all in about a second.

>p"SHOW-OFF!" Fujin yelled. iI could do that...i Squall swung Lionheart around at Fujin's neck. Fujin spun and brought her shiruken up. The blade of Lionheart got caught between the star-blades of the shiruken

>pThe two managed to free their respective weapons and both went tumbling backwards.
pBefore Squall could attack again, Seifer grabbed her from behind, pinning her arms at her side. Raijin did the same to Fujin, and both women thrashed around fit to kill, but Seifer and Raijin held them down.

>p align=center* * *p

>p"Who?" Seifer repeated for perhaps the eighth time.
p"Irvine." She recieved another blank stare. "The horny cowboy?"

>p"The sniper?!?" Squall nodded. He turned to Fujin. "You trapped Squall in a closet with Irvine?!?" Fujin just looked away, holding

her head up proudly.
pSeifer sat back, chuckled slightly, and gave an off-handed glance at the paperwork that he was supposed to fill out on the incident. He wearily ran his gloved-fingers through his hair. "All right," he said finally. "All right, what am I supposed to do with you two? Locking people in closets?" Here, he turned to Fujin.

>p"OFFENSE, NOT," she pointed out smugly.
p"Fightng," he continued. She pointed indignantly at Squall.

>p"ATTACKED, HER!"
p"And you instigated it." She glared at him and crossed her arms across her chest. Seifer sighed again. He wished that they had not fought where so many people just so conveniently happened to be. As his friends, he would have covered it up, but there was just no way he could cover this up and he took his Disciplinary Committee duty seriously.

>pSquall had remained silent so far since finally reminding Seifer who Irvine was. Her hands were folded, covering her face from view. "It doesn't matter," she said finally. Seifer looked at her.
p"What?"

>pShe put her hands down and looked at him. "It doesn't matter," she repeated. "She's right. I attacked her first. It doesn't matter that she instigated it. I attacked first."
pSeifer ran his hand over his face in a tired motion. "If you take full responsibility, the least I can get you off on is that you'd be relieved of your duties as the highest-ranking SeeD in Gardens for a week."

>pSquall had to keep herself from snorting derisively. iBe my guest,i she thought, but she instead replied, "...whatever.

>pMeanwhile, Fujin's mind was racing to figure out what Squall was up to. iWhat could she possibly gain? Does she want to be temporarily demoted? What's she up to?

>pSeifer studied Squall for a minute, debating as to what he should do. Technically, she was right, the responsibility was with her, but he was supposed to discipline all parties involved. For that matter, he SHOULD have punished Raijin for his own part in the conspiracy, but he hadn't, so at this point, the only one he couldn't get away with NOT punishing was Squall.
pHe sighed again. "Fine. You are hereby suspended of your duties and all rights and privalages therein pending the end of the week." He recorded the information on the papers and closed the thick folder labeled 'Leonhart, Squall'. He closed the one labeled 'Kazeno, Fujin' and put it away. He paused for a second and glanced at the profile on Squall, and noticed, perhaps for the first time, that no gender had ever been specified. He marked down 'female' and put the folder away.

> <p><p>

4. Default Chapter Title

p align=centerChapter 4:

>p align=centerLove Blossoms, Life Withers

>pSquall spent that next week either in her room, or in the Training Center, which is where she used to spend most of her time anyway. For the most part, she avoided Seifer and the other members of the Disciplinary Committee.
pSeifer let her have her distance, respecting that she just wanted to be alone. But at the end of the week, he decided to look for her.

>pHe found her, to no surprise, in the Training Center, fighting the local T Rexsaur. It was obvious that up to that point she had been merely toying with the creature, doing nothing but enjoying a good fight.
pOnce she caught sight of him though, she quickly dispersed with the monster, then turned to him, giving him that look that she

had given him that day, that look that made her appear to be someone else...

>p*Deja-vu. Hyne, I hate deja-vu.* He stared at her for a minute, sweat gleaming on her body, causing her hair, her clothes to cling to her. Why hadn't he noticed it in all those fights they had, when he was still Ultimcia's Knight, the way those leather pants clung to every curve, as slight as they were, the way they teased those who didn't know with the knowledge of what they really hid?

>pEven then, her body had only gentle curves, worked and molded to look boyish, to hide her true identity. Bandages, she had said.

Seifer wondered how much they actually hid, what he would find if he undid those bandages...
pHe mentally blocked the image. He had to stop thinking like that. She was still Squall, even though she was a woman.

>pThere was a silent, awkward moment between the two of them as these thoughts went through Seifer's mind, thoughts that were similar to the ones in Squall's mind.
p"Seifer," she mumbled, then cleared her throat and tried again. "Seifer, I wanted to...apologize. For attacking Fujin. It was wrong. Even if she DID lock me in a closet with Irvine."

>pSeifer chuckled at the thought, and fought down the jealousy that unexpectedly ripped through him. This woman before him had been HIS best friend, HIS rival, HIS enemy...what right did they have to lay any such claim to her?
p"It's okay. It was pretty low locking you in a closet with...Irvine," he replied, putting an extra emphasis on the name.

>pSquall was surprised at the quick forgiveness that she had received, and wondered, not for the first time, just how well she knew this man. She had expected arrogance, and his undying loyalty to his posse, but she found another side of him, one that still showed loyalty to his friends, his family, but also a loyalty to a lost, life-long friend.
p"I have the paperwork on the Disciplinary Committee's budget increase in my room. I would have submitted it earlier, but I was grounded," she told him finally, smiling slightly at her word choice.

>pSeifer also seemed to find the term she used for her punishment amusing, and chuckled slightly. "Why is your paperwork in your room?"
pShe flushed slightly. "That's where I do all of my paperwork. I don't do very much, Xu does most of it. Poor girl. She deserved the promotion that I got." Seifer merely shrugged at this. Squall looked around nervously, unsure of what she should do next.

"Do want to go get the forms?" she asked finally.

>p"What? Oh! The budget increase. Right. Sure, we can go get it now." Squall nodded once and led him back towards the dorms, collecting her wits about her as they walked down the halls, Seifer's strides matching her own beside her.
p"SEIFER," Fujin stopped them as they passed her and Raijin in the halls. "GOING, WHERE?"

>p"To get the paperwork on our budget increase," he replied.
p"Great, ya know!" Raijin chimed, earning a discreet kick from Fujin, who stormed off to the Disciplinary Room, Raijin on her heels.

>pWhen they reached Squall's dorm room, she kicked off her shoes, then started leafing through the various folders in her top dresser drawer, searching for the wanted forms while Seifer shut the door without her realizing it.
p"Here ya go," she said, handing him a small folder with a few sheets of official-looking paper in it. He gave it an empty glance, and set it aside on her dresser. Squall tugged off her jacket undid the belts strapped around her thigh.

>pShe looked up in surprise when she saw that he had not left, and

removed the belts that hung loosely around her hips in an 'X' formation.
p"Was there something wrong with the papers?" She asked, pulling off the last belt around her waist and hanging them, and the jacket up in her closet.

>pSeifer had been leaning against the door, watching all of this, and had barely heard the question. "What? Oh, no, there's nothing wrong with them. I just thought I'd stay here awhile. If that's all right with you," he added as an afterthought.
pSquall looked at him, wanting to say yes, but unsure of how to say it. After a moment, she simply shrugged and said, "...whatever."

>pShe pulled out a manila folder from the drawer, quickly flipped through it, then put it back and pulled out another one.
p"Do you always keep it so hot in here? It's like a sauna!" Seifer's voice interrupted the silence, She looked up, startled, then grinned sheepishly.

>p"Sorry. There's a malfunction in my climate control. You can make yourself comfortable however you need. There's a chair over here if you want to sit down," she offered, searching vainly through the papers in her dresser. Seifer stepped behind her and over to the chair, and pulled off his coat, shoes, and, after a moment's hesitation, his vest and draped them over the chair. He left his gloves on, and Squall wondered if he ever took them off.
pShe silently swore at her own gloves, still on her hands, when she had trouble separating two sheets of paper, and angrily yanked them off and slammed them on the dresser surface. She grabbed a fat folder finally and turned back to her bed, only to run into Seifer, scattering papers all over the floor.

>p"Here, let me help," he said, bending down to pick up papers just as she did, their foreheads colliding. They groaned, both of them holding hands to their foreheads, a habit that most humans had in such a situation.
p"I am so sorry," she apologized, flustered as she began to pick up papers haphazardly. He bent down too, and picked up some papers, though much more calmly than her. She stopped and looked at him, his bare skin, muscles flexing ever-so-slightly as he gathered the pages, golden hair swaying slightly with his movements.

>pShe let go of the papers in her hands, allowing them to fall back down to the ground, and put her palms on either side of his face, gently forcing him to look at her. Before she knew what she was doing, she had pressed her lips to his.
pHis first impulse was to pull away, part of him still thought of Squall as a man, but the gentle touch of her hands on his face and her lips against his reminded him of the earlier image, of what he would find if he undid the bandages wrapped around her chest.

>pShe pulled back and looked at him, then turned bright red in embarrassment and turned away, hands dropping to her sides. "I'm sorry," she murmured. "I shouldn't have done that."
pHis response was to grab her shoulders and pull her to him, forcing her face to his, his lips meeting hers once more in a passionate kiss. She kissed him back with equal fervor, and could feel her hands wrap around his body as he pulled her close.

>pShe shivered as his hands slipped in under her shirt and pulled it off of her, the leather of his hands gliding over her sweat-soaked body with ease.
pHe was pleased to find that she did still bear the bandages, and he smiled as she folded her arms over her chest to hide the unsightly cloth, embarrassed that she would still wear them even though she was no longer hiding her identity.

>pShe started stammering out an excuse that he did not hear. He put a finger to her lips, stopping her from saying any more. He undid the bandages, forcing her to turn in circles as the cloth was unwound

from her body.
pHe was pleased to discover that she did have a very voluptuous body underneath her restraints, unexpectedly feminine, curvaceous in figure, with skin the soft shade of porcelain. He held his hands at her face, gently brushing against her skin, moving them down over her neck, her chest, dancing lightly over her breasts, wrapping themselves around her waist.

>pWarm breath trailed across her face, down her body, leaving a steamy trail down her skin. He tugged at her leather pants, the material sticking to her skin, resisting his advances into the most forbidden regions of her body.
pShe sucked in her breath as his tongue sent a fire through her that she had never felt before. A sensation, so new, washed over her as she felt her muscles tighten involuntarily, both trying to push him away and pull him farther inside of her at the same time.

>pSeifer ran his tongue along the tender skin, tasting her pleasure and hungry for her desire. He teased the center of Squall's womanhood, smiling as she finally surrendered, moans escaping her parted lips.
pHe could feel her body go limp as he stood up and held her to him, his tongue forcing its way into her mouth, allowing her to taste her own sweetness from his mouth. Her muscles ached with tension as she allowed herself to be totally and completely helpless to him for the first time in her life.

>pThe burn between his thighs was becoming more insistent until it was almost painful with every passing second. Seifer deprived himself of his pants, holding Squall up against him, only adding to the ache more.
pFeeling strength return to her muscles, she wrapped her legs around him, moving her hips in slow and deliberate circles with an expertise that only hours before would have been foreign to her. Seifer groaned as he felt her body against his sex, rubbing, teasing him with lust. Right then and there he could have easily laid her on the floor and raped her willing body over and over again until his desire was sated, but he knew that this would be her first time, and he respected her more than that. It would be HER choice to the end.

>pHe reluctantly untangled her from his body, leading her over to the bed and pulling her on top of him. Sweat dripped down her forehead as she bent down and took him in her mouth.
pSeifer's breath caught in his throat as Squall's tongue slid along the surface of his length, bringing groans of ecstasy to his lips. She pulled at him with her teeth, gently running her mouth along the heat between his legs. His hips started to thrust himself into her mouth in a vicious rhythm, every muscle in his body tightening as he came.

>pHer breathing hard and heavy, Squall slowly crawled back up to his eye-level, her body resting on his. He, too, was gasping for breath as he slowly ran his hands along her sides and her arms, the leather of his gloves still between his skin and hers. Almost hesitantly, he removed the gloves and held her face in his bare hands, pulling her lips to his.
pSeifer felt his desire harden again beneath her body, and he could barely restrain himself from taking her for his own right then. Squall could feel his hardness against her, and sat up, poising herself above him, his hands grasping her hips. She hesitated, part of her still unsure, but when she saw the contorted look on his face, telling her that he kept the decision in her hands, she lowered herself onto him, gasping as the initial pain ripped through her most intimate areas.

>pA sigh almost seemed to escape Seifer's slightly-parted lips as he thrust with unhindered passion, causing Squall to bite her lip as the pain faded away and was replaced by a pleasure that was an agony in itself. Fire ripped through every part of her body as she felt muscles start to go limp. She could feel Seifer's passionate come

inside of her, then he, too, went limp, holding on to her as if she might disappear.
pShe lay her head on his chest, breathing hard, sweat dripping down her face. Her eyelids started to close on their own; she was so tired, lulled into sleep from the effects of their lovemaking. He held her close to him, and the two fell asleep.

>p align=center* * *p

>pNobody seemed to mind her staying in the boy's dorms, or if they did they were sure as hell too afraid to say so. She had spent enough time in Raijin's bedroom that she ended up scaring away his roommate. That was when she more or less moved in. Being on the Disciplinary Committee, she got away with it. And none of the other guys protested that Raijin got a girl in his dorm while no one else did...it was FUJIN, for Hyne's sake!
p"Yay! Sleepover, ya know!" Raijin clapped his hands giddily. His buddy, Fujie, hadn't spent much time with him lately, and he was happy. "Let's play Truth or Dare, ya know?"

>p"I'd rather play 'Melt the action figures,'" she said sadly.
p"That's Seifer's game, ya know? He'd be MAD if we played it without him."

>p"Would he? Does he even care at all...?"
p"COURSE he does, ya know! C'mon, c'mon. Truth or dare."

>pFujin didn't answer him at first. She just stared out his door at the SeeD dorms across the hall. "TRUTH," she said eventually.
pRaijin frowned. He had the PERFECT dare, too.

"Okay... um...d'ya, like ever lose your toothbrush and have to use mine?"

>p"You know you're the only one who does that."
pRaijin sighed.

>p"Okay," she said, never looking away from you-know-who's door. "Truth or dare."
p"Dare, ya know!" Fujin smiled. iPerfect./i

>p"I dare you to sit outside Squall's door until she comes out."
p"Okay, but, why, ya know?" Fujin sneered.

>p"Because I told you to! You can't back down from a dare!"
p"Okay, ya know?" Raijin got up and went to Squall's door, and sat down by it, a determined look on his face.

>pFujin almost burst out laughing at the goofy look on his face. He wouldn't let her down, not this time. He would NOT move until Squall came out of her room.
p align=center* * */p

>pSquall gasped for breath, Seifer's full weight on her, her arms pinned above her head by his strong hand. His fierce rhythm was making her head spin, wild, untamed, taking complete and total control of her body. It was as if with every thrust he marked her as HIS property, that everyone else must keep their hands off.
pSuch possessiveness.

>pHe pushed in harder, making her grimace with desire and agony. He came inside of her, stiffening, then relaxed, releasing her wrists. After a moment, he rolled off of her and she shifted around to rest her head on his chest. He wrapped an arm around her and stroked her hair absently, smiling in a self-satisfied way as he felt how wet her brunette locks were from sweat.
pThey laid like that in comfortable, early-morning peace. How many times during the night had they done this, waking up and making love, each time differently, then fall asleep again, only to wake up and do it all over again? Squall had lost count.

>pAfter awhile, Seifer sighed.
p"I need to get to class," he told her. She turned around to look at him.

>p"Do you have to?" she asked pleadingly.
p"Yeah, I do," he replied resignedly as he got up. After a moment, Squall got up and got dressed as well.

>p"Good luck in class," she told him, giving him a kiss.
p"Save your luck for a student who needs it," he retorted irritably. She laughed and kissed him again, her lips curling up in a smile. She wrapped her arms around his neck, curling a leg up around him. His hands pulled playfully at her double belts.

>p"Good luck in class," she told him again, laughing at his more than irked scowl. "I'm kidding." She kissed him again, then let him go, just then realizing as he left her room, that she was left to pick up the papers dropped the night before by herself.
pSeifer tripped over a very large and inconveniently-placed, snoring object.

>pHe turned to see Raijin, who had woken up screaming, "She came out! She came out! Oh, wait, you're not Squall."
p"No shit."

>pMeanwhile, a few kids had noticed the commotion and stepped out to see what was happening in the hall, Fujin among them. She stared silently at the scene for a second, and then stomped back into Raijin's room. Then Squall stepped out to see what was going on, also tripping over Raijin, who had yet to move.
pThe kids started whispering among themselves, commenting about the compromising situation, although none seemed shocked about her part in it. It just went to show her what people thought of her.

>p"Get to class," she whispered. He got up and left, leaving her to handle the crowd, much to her dismay.
pBefore anymore was said, Selphie came running up to Squall.

>p"Squall! It's way super-bad! She's ODed again!"
p"Who?"

>p"Rinoa of course! Who else ODs?"
p"So use a Curaga."

>p"We tried! Nothing works!"
p"What am I supposed to do?"

>p"How am I supposed to know, dippy? She's the one that wanted me to get you."
pSquall sighed and followed Selphie to Rinoa's dorm.

>pAs soon as Rinoa saw that Squall had arrived, she ordered everyone else to leave, a fact that made Squall acutely uncomfortable.
p"Squall," she croaked. iShe's dying. She's really dying. She's killed herself./i Squall thought. "I want to tell you that I forgive you." iForgive me? Forgive me what?/i "I want you to take my powers."

>

5. Default Chapter Title

p align=centerChapter 5 /p

>p align=centerA Sorceress is born p

>
p"D'ya think this means Squall is in our posse now?" Raijin eventually went back to his room, as he didn't have any classes until later. When he stumbled in Fujin jumped a foot off of the bed upon which she was sitting.

>p"R-RAIJIN!" she had a big puffy red eye, like a cyclops with allergies.
p"Woah. Were you, like, crying or something?"

>p"RAGE!" Kick.
p"Sor-ry for carin', ya know?" He grimaced. "Now I'm not even gonna give ya a hug, ya know?"

>pFujin was caught off guard by the remark, and laughed slightly. "BAD... WHY?"
p"Wull... 'cause you're sad, ya know?" He sat down on his bed, and she on hers. "It hurts me to see ya sad like that."

>pShe did not say anything for a long time. "You're... a good man, Raijin. A good friend." She forced a smile. "I'm not up to classes today. I need to get out of here for a while. What do you say we go

fishing? Just you and me?"
p "I say..." He jumped over and hugged her around the waist. "I'm there, dude!"

>p "RAGE!"
p align=center* * *

>p Seifer already had to beat up 13 students who were giving him crap about the previous night spent in Squall's dormitory, and the count was about to rise to 14.
p "Get lost, Dinky." Chicken-Wuss's newest nickname, as irony would have it, had been derived from rumors of his own Squall experience.

>p "Hey, chill, baby!" Zell blocked his face. "When I said I wanted to talk to you about Squall, I meant her POWERS!"
p "Powers..?"

>p "Oh yeah! She got Rinoa's powers!"
p "Rinoa's...?"

>p "Rinoa DIED this morning. Hell, you're out of it!"
p At least I don't have to listen to her anymore./i "So she passed her powers to--" he cut himself off, suddenly recollecting something. "SHIT."

>p "She passed her powers to shit? What?"
p align=center* * *

>p "But you're all right..?" he asked again.
p "I'm fine, Seifer," she said flatly, pulling her hand away from her throbbing head to help illustrate. "I'm just... woozy, okay? And I feel kinda bad about Rinoa. I mean... she was annoying, but..."

>p "You're all right."
p "Yes."

>p "You don't feel weird or...?"
p "I am FINE!" Squall insisted. "I just got Sorceress powers; you're lucky I'm not in a goddamn coma!"

>p Seifer frowned. "Do you even know why you've been cross-dressing all these years?"
p Squall considered it. "Well there WAS a reason..."

>p Seifer stared at her for a long time, and it made her horribly uncomfortable. Eventually he said, "Nevermind. It's stupid. These things ain't real anyway... well, as long as you're okay." He turned around and marched away.
p align=center* * *

>p "Cid, I do NOT have time for this," Seifer moaned. Any other day he could've gotten in to see Edea without running into her pathetic husband, the Headmaster Cid.
p "You have to get to class, young man," Cid replied.

>p "What's going on here?" Edea Kramer's voice boomed from behind Cid.
p "Nothing, dear," Cid answered. "I'm just sending Almasy to class."

>p "Seifer? What are you doing out of class?"
p "I need to speak to you, ma'am. About Rinoa's death."

>p "Rinoa's death? She died? Why doesn't anybody tell me anything?" Cid grumbled. Seifer ignored him.
p "She passed her powers to Squall."

>p "What? How? I thought only women could be Sorceresses!" Edea sighed.
p "Dear, I believe that if you check the recently updated records you will find the information necessary for your puny mind to understand this situation." Seifer snickered.

>p "As Headmaster I believe that I should have been told of any new information without having to 'check the records'." Seifer sighed exasperatedly.
p "What the hell does THAT matter? Get out of my way, old man!"

>p "Old- why I never!" Cid stuttered.
p "Please leave, Cid," Edea said calmly. "I'd like to talk to Seifer."

>p Cid looked indignant, then left, mumbling something about no respect for authority.
p "I want to know what's going on, Edea," Seifer demanded, which was completely unlike him, but he figured that he was justified seeing how his day had started very, very good and then went bad the moment he had stepped out of Squall's room. It had

gone downhill from there.

>p"I trust Squall had told you why she had been in disguise?"
pSeifer shrugged. "A long time ago, yeah. But we'd both forgotten. Once I heard that Rinoa had given her powers to Squall, I thought I remembered, but Squall insisted she was fine..."

>p"She's not FINE, Seifer, she ULTIMECIA!"
p"...Are you sure? She doesn't LOOK like Ultimelia..."

>p"You wouldn't know what Ultimelia looks like."
p"She looks like you."

>p"No, she looks more like a tattooed, two-eyed Fujin with bad hair."
p"Fujin with two eyes? Freaky. Wait, wouldn't Fujin be Ultimelia then?"

>p"No, there was more to the prophecy than that."
pSeifer considered it. "Yeah, I can't really see Fujin with tattoos anyway. Raijin maybe."

>p"It's definitely Squall." Edea sighed. "I wish that I could tell you not to do what you're going to, but I've learned that you can't change the flow of time... things will happen as they do."
p"You know what's going to happen?" It was more a statement than a question.

>pShe nodded. "And there's nothing I intend to do about it. I just hope you're happy with your choice." She started to walk away. "Get to class."
p"What the hell is she talking about?" he said to nobody in particular, but deep down he already knew.

>p align=center* * *p

>pClass, for Seifer, was redundantly long and boring. He already knew everything they taught in them, and had for a very long time now, but he continually had to take them as along as he didn't pass the SeeD test. Which, of course, he wasn't very likely to do since he couldn't follow the orders of anyone besides a Sorceress if he were her Knight.
pThat thought, of course, gave him an idea.

>piHey! Yeah, I'll get a Sorceress to ORDER me to follow the SeeD test orders! Now, who do I know that's a Sorceress? Edea would be all 'No, you have to do it yourself' but Squall... yeah, Squall will help me out. All I have to do is get her to let me be her Knight. That'll be no problem. She's crazy about me. But then again, who wouldn't be?i

>p align=right"I cannot agree with those who rate p

>p align=rightmodesty among the virtues." p

>p align=right-Sherlock Holmes
p align=center* * * /p

>p"A Knight?" Squall asked somewhat skeptically.
p"Yeah! Every Sorceress needs one!" Seifer replied, nonetoo-subtly.

>p"What would I need one for? I don't need any help with my job..."
p"Wha...What does that matter? New responsibilities come with Sorceress powers and a Knight is supposed to protect his Sorceress."

>p"I never needed protection before."
p"Well, now you're a target for other Sorceresses," Seifer stuttered, clearly out of excuses. Squall smiled amusedly.

>p"You want me to hire you as a Knight so I can pay you to do nothing."
p"What? I never said anything about ME, specifically..."

>p"But you were as obvious about it as Zell with a girl." Seifer leaned back in the chair and kicked his feet up on her bed, shoes and all, something he knew she HATED.
p"Now don't be so sure of that. He WAS with a girl, not too long ago..." he told her, flashing her a playful grin. She scowled, glancing down at his feet that were in front of her, pretending not to be bothered by them.

>p"If you want a job, you really should NOT say those kind of things to your employer." He chuckled.
p"So do I get the job?" he asked,

exaggerating his natural accent enough to irritate her. She sighed.

>p"Sure, whatever. I don't know what I'd DO with Knight, but..."
p"Really? I could think of something," he teased, and flew off of the chair and swept her up off of the bed. He grabbed her around the waist and twirled her around. She laughed.

>pA box in the corner marked "STUFF" caught Seifer's attention.
p"Hey, what's that?" he asked, letting go of her and walking to the box.

>p"Hey! Don't...you...you can't look through those!"
pSeifer pulled out a dress that looked strangely like Rinoa's.

>p"If you think that dressing like Rinoa is gonna turn me on, you're sadly mistaken." Squall turned bright red. She walked up to him, snatched the dress away, and threw it back into the box.
p"Rinoa left those for me. She was rambling something about having to look like a girl since I WAS one," she explained.

>p"So she figures that looking like her qualifies?"
p"I guess." Seifer continued searching through the box, which made Squall wonder what he was up to.

>pIt was not long before he pulled out a skimpy, INCREDIBLY obscene, leather, tiger-print dress.
p"Here's one that's you all over! I know how you like leather. All we need now is to find ya a matching collar!" Squall raised an eyebrow. iMatching collar? Is he nuts or just incredibly kinky?/i

>p"...whatever."
pSeifer pulled out an itchy-looking, redundantly lacy bra out of the box. "Hey, no excuse anymore, eh? You need me to uhhelp/u you put it on?"

>p"..." iHe IS nuts. There is no WAY that I'm wearing that thing. The bandages are more comfortable. I wouldn't even know how to put that bra on.i

>pNext he found a cottony dress so thin that Squall could see his trenchcoat through it. "Here we go!"
p"I am NOT wearing that."

>p"Why not?" She shot him an evil look. "Well, if you hate clothes so damn much, why do you even wear them?"
p"..." iIt's not that I HATE clothes, I'm just comfortable with my own, thank you very much. I'd rather NOT look like a slut./i

>p"You really ought to get some new threads, though. Don't you know the leather look is out, Leonhart?"
p"So's the trenchcoat look."

>p"But I can make anything look good."
p"And I can't?" She shot him the evil eye again.

>p"Nothin' looks good on you."
p"HEY- oh!" She looked at him, once more uncomfortable under his gaze. She was unsure of what to do, even though she knew what he was implying by his 'nothin looks good on you' comment. She really wished she hadn't been in disguise for so long. Maybe she would know more of what the hell was going on beyond what the books taught her.

>p"Well?" Seifer asked expectantly. "You never answered my question, if you hate clothes so much, why the bloody hell do you wear them?" She crossed her arms in a pouting motion.
p"I do NOT hate clothes."

>p"You sure act like it."
p"I do not!"

>p"Ya bloody do, too!"
p"I do not, Seifer Almasy, and you know it." He dropped the dress back into the box and grabbed her, pinning her down on the bed. He tickled her mercilessly, his fingers catching her sensitive ribs, causing her to laugh until tears ran down her cheeks.

>p"Do you surrender?" he asked over her peals of laughter.
pShe nodded, giggling too hard to verbally answer. He stopped tickling

her, and just held her until she could breath normally again. She looked at him, unsure of what she should say or do.

>p"I heard about the crap you got from the kids," she said finally. "I'm sorry that I caused you trouble." He shook his head and laughed.
p"No apology needed, luv. They got the shit beat outta them, and even if they hadn't, I still got the better end of the deal."

>pShe pulled his face down to hers in response, her lips brushing his lightly. She slipped her arms into his trenchcoat, hoping he wouldn't push her away, that last night hadn't been a dream. He pressed his lips against hers fiercely, responding to her actions, his hands guiding her own over his body.
pThey pulled away, Seifer removing his coat and vest, draping them over the chair. Squall sat up and removed her shirt, exposing the fact that she no longer wore the bandages. Seifer swore and meant it sincerely, something that brought a flush to her face.

>pHe grabbed her and placed a fiery kiss on in the crook of her neck, her shoulder, along the sensitive skin of her chest. His tongue teased her nipples until they were sore and red. Squall forced herself to not give Seifer the satisfaction of a whimper as his lips moved back up to her face, kissing the side of it gently, moving to meet her lips.
pHis hands undid the clasps of her pants, removing them and tossing them off-handedly to the floor. He placed his strong hand inside her heat. She gasped, lifting her hips up into his touch.

>p"Seifer," she breathed, her hair falling back, sweat dripping down her face. He bent his face down to her neck, nipping gently at the sensitive skin. "Seifer..." she moaned again, her eyes fluttering close. She slipped her hands down his pants, imitating his actions on his own heat, relieving him of his pants.
pSeifer sucked in his breath, his hips moving against her palm. Unable to take it anymore, he pulled back his hand, and slipped himself inside of her, his hips thrusting violently into her. She gasped for breath, her fingers grasping his back fiercely.

>p"Seifer...Seifer..." she groaned his name repeatedly, raising her hips to meet his motion.
pHe tensed as he came, then all but collapsed in her arms, holding her tightly in his embrace.

>p"Ah, luv, you're learning," he mumbled into her sweat-soaked hair. She worked to get her breath back, holding him tightly to her, not willing to let him go.
p"Stay with me tonight?" she asked quietly, fearing that he would say no.

>p"Of course," he said, then yawned. "Of course, luv..." at this point, he fell asleep, and Squall sighed contentedly, her arms still around her lover's waist.

6. Default Chapter Title

p align=centerChapter 6 /p

>p align=centerIdentities Revealed p

>
pFujin and Raijin ate breakfast at their usual table. Raijin babbled on and on, not really noticing that Fujin was preoccupied with her daydreams. She hadn't taken a bite of her cereal and it was soggy, which he pointed out.

>p"RAGE!" she yelled at the cereal.
pRaijin blinked. "Are ya all right? 'Cause...ya normally don't yell at food, ya know?"

>p"RAGE!" she yelled and kicked him.
p"That's better, ya know..." he groaned.

>pSeifer walked up to the table, a disturbingly wide grin on his face. "Hi," he greeted as he sat down. "So. Raise your hand if you

scored last night!" He raised his hand

So did Raijin, drawing confused looks from his friends.

>p"You...scored?"
p"Oh, yeah! I scored off Fujin big time, ya know?"

>pNow Seifer looked to Fujin.
p"RAGE!" Kick. Then she explained to Seifer, "RAIJIN, NAIIVE. FOOTBALL, SCORE."

>p"Sure, Fuj," Seifer siad, winking. Fujin absolutely hated it when people winked. Well...usually not Seifer, but in this situation, it made her angry.
pThat was when Squall came up. She had obviously decided to wear one of the many oh-so-wonderful outfits that Rinoa had left for her. This particular ilittle/i number was a silky spaghetti-strap dress of a white shade, with a skirt that hit her mid-thigh. She wore a pair of ankle boots with heels so spiky, Squall had spent more than fifteen minutes learning how to walk correctly in those things without killing herself. Fujin had to assume by Seifer's surprised look that Seifer had to have left the dorm room early and had not seen what she was wearing.

>pFujin and Raijin took one look at that outfit and burst into laughter. Squall blushed and started to leave, but Seifer yelled out, "Hey, Squall! Saved ya a SPOT!" He patted the seat of the chair beside his and everyone was staring...
pSquall irritably shoved a lock of hair behind her ear, quietly swearing when her hair caught on her earring. She stumbled slightly to the chair and sat down, mumbling a quiet "Hello."

>p"Heya, Squall! Ya look real pretty, ya know!" Raijin exclaimed cordially.
p"...thanks."

>p"Yup, ya look real good. Now if we could just get Fujin to..."
p"RAGE!" Kick.

>p"Great news," Seifer announced, sliding Raijin's tray across the table and claiming it as his own, because, after all, he could always go get another one. "I got a job! We're gonna drop outta Garden again!" Squall shot him a dirty look. "Or not..."
p"How'd ya get a job, ya know? You're not qualified for anything, ya know?"

>p"RAGE!" Kick.
p"I beg to differ. I'm a very reputable Knight."

>p"KNIGHT?" Fujin demanded.
p"Ya promised ya wouldn't put us through that again, ya know?" Raijin said sadly.

>p"Relax. I'm a good Knight. For real this time."
p"SORCERESS?"

>pSeifer paused. "Oh! You guys probably haven't heard! Rinoa died!"
p"YAY!" they exclaimed simultaneously. And then, "OH. SORRY." Squall shrugged.

>p"SQUALL?" Fujin figured as much. Life just wasn't FAIR.
p"Yeah!" Seifer answered. "And we're gonna go get a new GF today. You guys wanna come?"

>p"AFFIRMATIVE." She wanted to keep her eye on them...
p align=center* * * /p

>p"Are you sure you can fly this thing?" Seifer queried after a rough take-off.
p"If Selphie can, I can," Squall replied, shrugging. Of course, when she shrugged she momentarily let go of the control stick, sending them into a nosedive. "Oops!" Squall grabbed the stick again. "Sorry about that."

>pRaijin was clinging onto Fujin with horror, and try as she might, she could not pry him off...alothough maybe she could have tried harder- she was quite scared herself.
p"CRASH! BURN! DIE!" Fujin screeched.

>p"Do you have to keep saying that?" Squall snapped. "We are NOT gonna crash!"
p"I'm too young to die, ya know!" Raijin whined.

>p"So, where are we going?" Seifer attempted to ask casually, but he too was frightened. He had seen his valiant and noble life flash before his eyes and he didn't like the way it ended.
p"To Warship Island!" Squall exclaimed with a slight hint of glee in her voice. "To get the greatest GF of all time!"

>p"Bahamut?" Raijin guessed.
p"Eden?" Seifer's guess was better.

>p"PANDEMONIA," Fujin snarled.
p"Oh, I never did give him back to you, did I?" Then, much to the Disciplinary Committee's dismay, she got up and walked across the bridge. Raijin screamed and squeezed Fujin so hard she could barely breathe. Seifer's jaw dropped open and he felt like he was going to faint. Squall held out the GF for her to take.

>p"I DON'T WANT IT THAT FUCKING BAD!" Fujin screeched, hugging Raijin back now.
p"Relax. I got the Ragnarok on cruise control."

>p"You mean auto-pilot," Seifer corrected nervously.
p"No, cruse con- oh, SHIT!"

>p align=center* * * p

>p"WHAT?" Squall yelped. "You guys are making WAY too big a deal of this! My landing wasn't THAT bad!"
pFujin stood completely motionless, an expression of silent horror frozen on her face. Raijin was making quite the display of dancing about and kissing the ground and repeatedly thanking the gods. As for Seifer, his face turned an unhealthy shade of green and he dashed to the other side of the island to throw up.

>pMeanwhile, Squall took a look at the flaming wreckage and decided to call Garden to come fix it. Of course, at Garden's rate of speed that would take over a week, which Squall announced.
p"WHAT?" Fujin and Raijin shouted simultaneously.

>p"Relax! Depending on how far away Garden is, it'll take one, two weeks tops. Meanwhile, I've got plenty of tents and there's a Save Point just inside. It'll be like camping out."
p"CAMPING, HATED."

>p"She ain't kiddin', ya know! She's like a poison ivy magnet, ya know!"
p"...IGNORE."

>pSquall sighed, although trying to look on the bright side. If nothing else she'd have some quality time with Seifer and a chance to make nice with his friends. Somehow, she got the idea that Fujin didn't like her very much.
p"RAGE!" Fujin, who had gotten over her shock, kicked Squall in the shin. "SQUALL, STUPID! PILOT, BAD! STUCK, ISLAND! HATED! RAGE!" Kick. Then, as she still wanted to vent, she walked back up to Raijin, knowing he'd give her a reason to beat him up sooner or later.

>pMeanwhile, Seifer was feeling well enough to start hitting on Squall again, and Fujin picked up something about 'What a ROMANTIC spot to spend our two-day anniversary' and decided to head inside the old deep sea research facility where she could be far away from what she now considered a really, ureallyu GROSS love affair.

>p"Wait up, ya know!" Raijin trailed after her, determined not to let his friend be eaten by an Anacondor or Bomb or other oh-so-powerful Warship Island critters.
pFujin hopped down the hole, taking no heed of the height, and Raijin climbed down after her. By the time he caught up with her, she was already punching buttons on the air pressure machine. "Where are ya goin', ya know?"

>p"DOWN."
p"But, like...I heard that's where thd DANGEROUS enemies are, ya know!"

>p"GOOD."
p align=center* * * /p

>pTwo tents. Not one, but two tents. Tents were only made for three people, but Seifer insisted that they split into groups of two for

safety's sake. Of course, he insisted that it would be best if he bunked with Squall so he could protect her better.
p"Knight's duty," he had said.

>p"Wait a minute," Squall protested, pushing him off of her. "Where did Fujin and Raijin go?" She ducked out of their shared tent and up to the Big Hole.
pSeifer, a bit irritably, followed, coming up behind her. "I don't bloody know. Down, I suppose. Why?"

>p"Do you think they're smart enough to run the air pressure doors?"
p"I dunno about Raijin, but... yeah, so what?"

>p"There are Behemoths down there, and Ruby Dragons, among other things..."
p"They can handle it!" Seifer snapped, upset that his advances had been spurned. "I'm the one who taught 'em how to fight, remember?"

>p"It's nice to see that you have so much...confidence in your friends/i, but don't you think we ought to check up on them?"

>p"Naw. They can take care of themselves," Seifer replied with an enticing voice. He draped his arms over her shoulders, resting his head on hers. "I got my hands full with you, anyway." She leaned back into his arms. At that moment she could have stayed there like that forever, just in his sweet embrace, but she knew that Fujin and Raijin were in danger, and even if she wasn't very good friends with Fujin, she still was the reason they were there and she should help them.
p"No," she said, her voice breaking. She pulled away from him. "We're going down after them."

>p"But..."
p"That's an ORDER," she snarled, hardly believing what she was doing.

>p"Fine." Seifer gipped the handles and climbed down.
p align=center* * * /p

>p"HELP, UNNECESSARY," Fujin spat as she bandaged Raijin's arm. She glared at both Seifer and Squall across the fire. "FINE, ALONE."
p"Yeah, that's what I said, but Squall insisted." Seifer laughed.

>p"Well excuse me for being concerned!" Squall exclaimed defensively.
p"I think it was real nice, ya know?" Raijin piped up cheerfully.

>p"...IGNORE," Fujin said. She would have 'RAGE'd but he was in enough pain already.
p"Why are we HERE anyway?" Seifer asked. "Didn't you already get all the GFs here?"

>p"This is where two of the three most powerful GFs in the world are." Squall shrugged. "Why not the first?"
p"REASON, STUPID! RAGE!" She would have kicked her too, but she was too busy tending to Raijin's wounds.

>p"That's not my only reason," Squall said, a little hurt. "See, in my spare time, I've been searching for this GF...Griever."
p"Seifer choked, which was really bad seeing how he wasn't eating or drinking anything at the time "Excuse me, maybe I didn't hear you right...GRIEVER?"

>p"Yeah." Squall fingered her necklace, something that she never took off as far as Seifer could tell. "Why not?"
p"Why not... WHY NOT? That's ULTIMECIA'S bloody GF and you KNOW it!" Seifer bellowed, jumping up to his feet and surprising everyone.

>p"Seifer..." Squall and fujin said simultaneously. Actually Fujin said, "SEIFER..."
p"Do you WANT to be Ultimelia? If that's what you WANT, say so! I told Fujin and Raijin I wasn't going to drag them through this again!"

>p"What are you talking about?" Squall cried. "Be Ultimelia? What is that supposed to mean?"
p"Do I have to spell it out for you? U...R...U-L-T..." He paused to consider just how one spelled that. "Ultimelia!"

>p"...what? Me? Ultimecia?"
pMeanwhile, Fujin was grinning, playing with her shiruken and loving every second. "ULTIMECIA, SQUALL."

>p"Wow! Squall is Ultimecia? That's weird, ya know!"
p"Even Raijin understands the concept!" Seifer snapped.

>p"Me?" Squall blinked. "But...but I'm not evil."
p"SQUALL, EVIL! KILL?" Fujin offered sweetly. "HAPPY, HELP."

>p"I am NOT evil!" Squall shouted. "And I'm NOT Ultimecia!" She seemed on the verge of tears. She placed her hand over her face, then ran it back through her hair wearily.
p"Fine," Seifer muttered. He squatted by the fire, looking furious. "Anything you say."

>pSquall stormed into her tent where she could sulk. Fujin started to say something unnecessarily sadistic, but a dirty look from Seifer shot it down, and she dragged Raijin into their tent.
pSeifer took a second to consider which tent to go into, and picked Squall's after all.

>pHe found her laying on her side, her back to him. Her body quivered every now and then with shuddering breaths as if she were working to keep from crying or she already WAS crying.
p"Go away," she said half-heartedly as he entered.

>p"I don't really know if you're Ultimecia. Not for sure, anyway."
p"...thanks a lot."

>p"But if you are, then you are. I'm still your Knight." She looked back at him over her shoulder.
p"Why?"

>p"I was before, wasn't I?"
p"I'm not controlling you now."

>p>Your loss."
pSquall wondered exactly what that was supposed to mean. She turned back from him, facing the tent side again. "I couldn't if I tried."

>p"Well, you'll learn, apparently."
p"I wouldn't if I could."

>p"Just...I don't care what you do with me, but leave my posse out of it." She turned back to him, hurt that he would believe that she would do anything to hurt them.
p"I'm not going to..."

>p"Promise."
p"Yeah, okay. I promise. Whatever." Seifer seemed satisfied with this, and proceeded to undress. Squall sat up and looked at him. "What are you doing?"

>p"Getting ready for bed. Is that a bloody problem?" She shook her head and sighed, then stared at the ground, completely zoning out.
pToo much. It was just all too much. So much had happened in the last week that she just couldn't deal anymore. She just couldn't believe that she was the evil Sorceress that she had hated and fought so hard against. She looked down at her hands.

>pYet she did have that woman's powers inside of her. It was possible. After Seifer had told her that she was Ultimecia, she realized right away that what he said was true. She just hadn't wanted to believe it. She remembered why she had been in disguise her whole life.
pEdea had foreseen her connection to Ultimecia through some prophecy and her own powers, and had tried to hide Squall from those powers, tried to prevent her from ever becoming that monster.

>p"Are you all right?" Seifer asked her, his voice cutting into her thoughts. She jumped, then dug thorough her bag for her sleeping clothes.
p"Yeah," she replied absently. "I think so. I'll be okay." She kissed his forehead and pulled off her dress.

>p"You're actually wearing the bra Rinoa left you?" he teased when he saw the horribly lacy piece of clothing she wore.
pSquall made a face. "Yes, I couldn't wear the bandages with this dress, and I sure as hell couldn't wear NOTHING with it."

>p"How in the name of Hyne did you get it on?"
p"With much difficulty," she responded, reaching her hands around to try to undo the clasps. She swore at the tiny hooks when they refused to come undone. Seifer chuckled and unhooked her bra for her. She scowled at him. "I would have gotten it eventually."

>p"And by that time, it would have been time to get up." He pulled off his pants and stuffed them in his bag. She crossed her arms.
p"I beg to differ," she retorted, then tugged off the boots. "I would NOT have taken that long to unhook my own damn bra." She pulled on her sleeping clothes.

>p"Wanna bet?" Seifer challenged as he slipped into his sleeping shorts.
p"I'll take those odds," she replied playfully. They settled into bed, Seifer pulling her close and draping an arm over her.

>p"G'night, luv," he yawned. "Big day tomorrow. Need our sleep." She snuggled into his warmth. She was just as content to sleep in his arms as anything. Yes, they needed their sleep.
pHer eyes drifted shut, and she breathed a contented sigh and fell asleep.

>p align=center* * * p

>pFujin and Raijin were already up, grilling snake meat on the fire, when Seifer came out of his tent. She shot him a questioning look that said, 'Gee, Brain, what're we going to do tonight?'. Or at least that was how he interpreted it.
p"We're gonna get that GF," he said.

>p"OKAY." Fujin junctioned Pandemonia. It was nice to have it back. "READY."
p"You and Raijin don't have to come. I mean..if you don't want to. Just 'cause I am."

>pFujin's look was now enigmatic, as if that was the most ridiculous thing she'd ever heard in her life. "WANT. RIGHT, RAIJIN?"
p"Roger, ya know!" Raijin chirped. "We love doin' stuff as a posse, ya know!"

>p"POSSE," Fujin spat. "PLUS ONE."
p"Squa-all!" Seifer called. "Get out here!" He turned to Raijin. "I swear, ever since she became a woman..." A boot flew out of the tent and smacked him in the back of the head.

>pAn irrepressible laugh made its way past Fujin's normally stoic facade, which she suddenly felt bad about, more because it was caused by Squall than at Seifer's defense.
p"RAIJIN," she said.

>p"Yeah, ya know?"
p"KICK ME."

>p"Why, ya know? I wouldn't do that!"
p"NOW!" Fuin, in an attempt to be inspiring, kicked him first.

>p"No.." he whimpered.
pSeifer rolled his eyes. "Oh, here." And then he kicked Fujin in the shin. "How was that?"

>pFujin hopped away. She never knew just how much that hurt. Oh well, she'd appreciate it more next time Raijin got his. "PERFECT..." she replied, attempting to smile.
pSquall came out then in her normal leather ensemble, Lionheart in hand. She gave an acknowledging "Good morning" to the trio then started to go down the entrance of the research facility. And she would have too, had Seifer not stopped her.

>p"Where do you think you're going?" he demanded.
p"Down, why?"

>p"Alone?"
p"Yeah. I promised that I'd leave Fujin and Raijin out of this, and I will."

>p"I'll still be there, though." She shook her head vehemently.
p"No, this is my mess and I'll handle it. Alone."

>p"But I'm supposed to protect you."
p"Seifer, you're staying here. That's an order."

>pSeifer moved to protest, then stopped himself. He grabbed a chunk of snake meat and tossed it to Squall. "Here," he said as she caught it. "You're gonna want something to eat."
p"Thanks," she replied, holding the meat with her teeth as she climbed down.

>p align=center* * * p

>pSeifer poked at the fire irritably. He couldn't believe that Squall was leaving him behind. He was supposed to protect her, for Hyne's sake!
p"I'm kinda worried about Squall, ya know?" Raijin commented, breaking the silence the three had sat in for an hour. Fujin would have said something but Seifer seemed mad enough already.

>pAfter a moment, Seifer spoke up. "We're going in after her."
p"But—"

>p"No buts. I know what she said, but she'll be killed if we don't."

End
file.